

4.0 Multi-modal Facilities

Multi-modal facilities include bike, pedestrian, and transit operations within the South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road area (Segment A). In addition to this segment, pedestrian and bike accommodations are present to a lesser degree in the rural portions of the corridor (Segments B and C). This section includes information from field observations and analysis of the present facilities available within the study area.

4.1 Transit Facilities

4.1.1 La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility

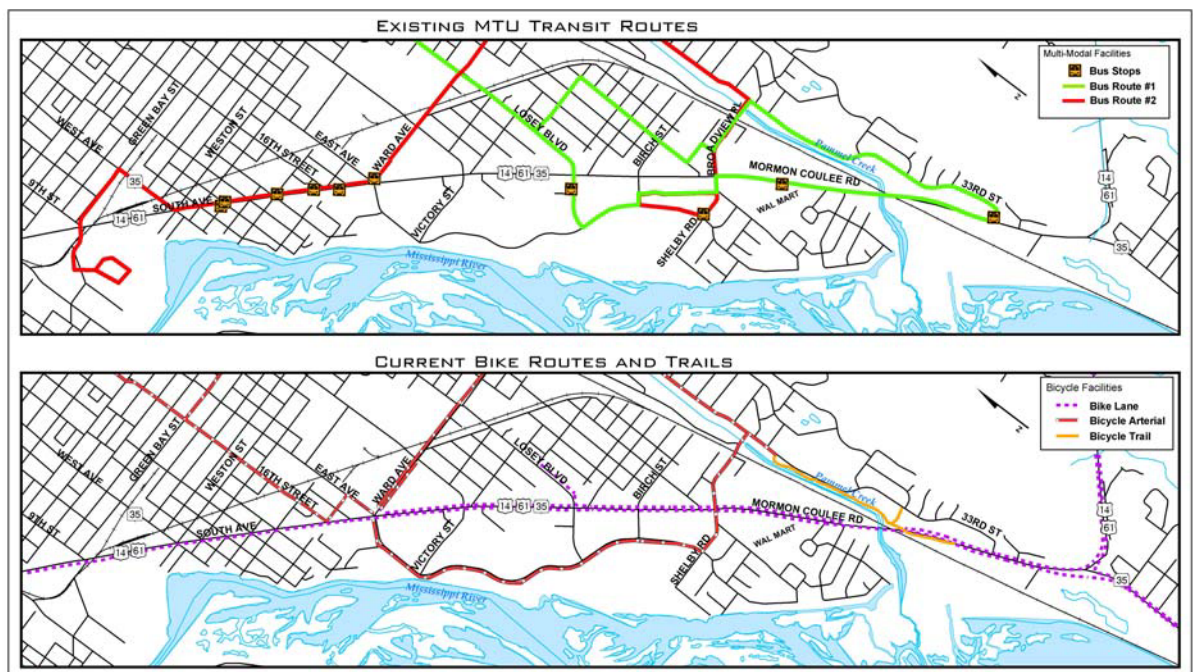


The La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility (MTU) operates six bus routes throughout the La Crosse area. Four of the routes radiate from the Downtown Transfer Center located at the 5th Avenue North/State Street intersection, while two circulator routes provide service to the airport and commercial districts on the north side of the metropolitan area. Portions of Route 1 and Route 2 exist within the study area.

Route 1 travels south on East Avenue and Mormon Coulee Road and north on 33rd and 28th Streets. In the corridor, Route 1 serves primarily commercial development on Mormon Coulee Road and residential development on 33rd Street; it also provides access to the 33rd Street Multi-use Trail.

Route 2 travels on Green Bay Street, West Avenue, South Avenue, and Ward Avenue. The route provides access to institutional, commercial, and residential activities within the study area. Transfer points between Routes 1 and 2 are located at the Ward Avenue/Losey Boulevard intersection, Broadway Place, Church Court, and at the Shelby Mall. Bus route configurations are shown on Figure 5, Multi-modal Accommodations and summarized in Table 2, MTU Bus Service.

Figure 5 – Multi-modal Accommodations



Full fares are \$1.00 and service operates Monday through Friday from 5:12 a.m. to 10:40 p.m. and Weekends from 7:42 a.m. to 7:40 p.m. (6:40 p.m. on Sunday).

Table 2 – MTU Bus Service

Route – General Routing Information	Locations Served	Headways (minutes)		
		Weekday	Evening	Saturday
Route 1 – Northbound and southbound on Losey Boulevard; northbound on 28 th Street and 33 rd Street; southbound on East Avenue, Losey Boulevard, and Mormon Coulee Road	UW La Crosse; Shelby Mall; Wal-Mart; Mormon Coulee Office Park; St. Pius, Faith Christian and Hintgen Elementary Schools	30	60	60
Route 2 – Northbound and southbound on West Avenue, South Avenue, and East Avenue; southbound on Elm Drive; northbound on 33 rd Street; eastbound and westbound on Ward Avenue and Green Bay Street	Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center; Riverfront Plaza; Shelby Mall; Archdiocesan Complex and St. Pius School	30	60	60

Source: La Crosse Municipal Transit Utility Rider's Guide

Transit stops are unevenly distributed and widely spaced within the study area because of the diverse land use activities and densities. Bus stops serve specific locations such as Wal-Mart, Shelby Mall, and large multi-family housing developments along the southern end of Mormon Coulee Road (between 33rd Street and Losey Boulevard). Along South Avenue (between Ward Avenue and Green Bay Street), bus stops serve both urban residential neighborhoods and transit markets such as Gundersen Lutheran Medical Clinic and the Riverfront Plaza.

Transit stops for northbound buses on South Avenue are located at the intersections of Ward and East Avenues; just north of 16th Street; at 15th Street/Chase Street (adjacent to Trane Park); and at 13th Place. Southbound riders may stop at 13th Place/Bennett Street; and at Riverfront Plaza north of 17th Street. Trane Park is not directly served by a southbound transit stop.

Northbound transit users going to/from Riverfront Center must use the stop on Ward Avenue at the South Avenue/East Avenue intersection, even though the stop at 16th Street is considerably closer. A crosswalk is not marked at the 16th Street stop, and traffic speeds and volumes make crossing dangerous or inconvenient, particularly for the disabled. The Ward Avenue stop is approximately 1,000 feet from the Riverfront Center, and passengers must cross three very wide street segments (12 travel lanes in all) at the signalized crossing in a relatively harsh pedestrian environment.

The stop on Mormon Coulee Road at the Wal-Mart features a pedestrian walkway leading from the bus stop to the building entrance, crossing the parking lot with a striped crossing. However, a lack of barriers allows vehicles to block the walkway and prohibit its use by pedestrians.

The bus stop on 33rd Street just east of Mormon Coulee Road is landscaped, but has no access to sidewalks; passengers walk in the road to wait for the

bus. A similar case exists at the MTU Route 2 bus stop located on Shelby Road at East Avenue, west of the Shelby Mall. This stop serves a senior citizen housing facility and a residential neighborhood but lacks adequate sidewalk connections.

The section of La Crosse MTU Route 2 that runs on 33rd Street serves a single family residential neighborhood. Both routes 1 and 2 stop at Shelby Mall; the entrance to the mall parking lot allows transit vehicles to enter the lot directly on a route adjacent to the store entrances.

Bus pullout areas are present at some of the bus stop locations along both South Avenue and Mormon Coulee Road. These pullout locations, as well as the implementation of other pullout locations along the corridor should be evaluated as traffic volumes increase on the corridor. High traffic volumes and shorter gaps between vehicles in the main traffic stream can make it difficult for busses to pull into traffic from the pullout area. This condition is more prevalent within tight urban corridors.

4.1.2 Proposed Regional Bus Service

Currently, no regional transit service exists beyond the urban segment of the study area. However, the La Crosse Area Planning Committee, in its January 2004 Regional Transportation Plan, had proposed regional fixed-route bus service linking regional population centers in La Crosse County (Wisconsin) with those in Houston County (Minnesota). One of the proposed routes would travel through portions of the study area. The proposed regional transit route would travel from the community of Shelby (near the US 14/61/Lautenbach Road intersection) west along US 14/61 to the US 14/61/WIS 35 intersection, and then northward along South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road to the City of La Crosse downtown area.

4.1.3 Intercity Bus Service

In August 2004, Greyhound Bus Lines discontinued service to 44 Wisconsin destinations, including large cities such as Janesville, Wausau, and La Crosse. Greyhound had provided two trips daily between La Crosse and Madison, and La Crosse and Minneapolis. Jefferson Bus Lines, a transportation company based in Minnesota, now provides service to the La Crosse inter-city market, establishing a route from Minneapolis to Madison via La Crosse. The inter-city route travels along the US 14/61 and South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road segments through the study area.

In La Crosse, Jefferson Bus Lines is currently using the Amtrak terminal at 601 St. Andrew Street on the north side of the city but may move to the new transit center to be located at the 3rd Avenue/Jay Street intersection downtown, when it opens in 2006.

The eastbound bus departs La Crosse for Madison at 3:10 p.m. daily (via the communities of Coon Valley, Westby, and Viroqua). The westbound bus departs for Minneapolis at 2:30 p.m. daily (via Winona, Minnesota). A one-way ticket from La Crosse to Madison costs approximately \$30; a one-way ticket from La Crosse to Minneapolis costs approximately \$24. Timetables and routing are subject to change.

4.1.4 Elderly and Disabled Transportation Service Providers

In addition to La Crosse MTU buses, four organizations provide special transportation service to elderly and disabled persons in La Crosse County. Three of those services operate in the study area, prioritizing medical and nutrition program trips. In addition, the programs provide grocery, employment, social, or personal trips on a reservation basis. The providers include:

- La Crosse MTU Mobility Plus – operates in the City of La Crosse during regular MTU operating hours; provides door-to-door service only for ADA-certified clients
- La Crosse County Health and Human Services – operates county-wide for the disabled, elderly, and children
- La Crosse County Aging Unit – provides county-wide service for the elderly

4.2 Bike Facilities

4.2.1 Multi-Use Trails



The 33rd Street Trail roughly parallels the urban segment from south to north. Also called the Pammel Creek Trail, the paved trail begins at Mormon Coulee Road just north of the Mormon Coulee Road/33rd Street intersection. The trail travels northward, passing underneath Mormon Coulee Road at the structure over the railroad corridor. The underpass includes pedestrian-scale lighting. Continuing north, the trail then diverges from Mormon Coulee Road (which is aligned to the northwest) and travels north along the bank of Pammel Creek, just west of 33rd Street, including numerous access points to that street and points east. The trail ends at Ward Avenue. Bikers can continue on the signed bike route along Broadview Place.

The 33rd Street Trail is scenic where it parallels Pammel Creek and is well landscaped along its entire length. The trail travels through a residential neighborhood and links low-volume arterial bike routes on the south side of the City of La Crosse. However, because only two bridges cross Pammel Creek in the study corridor (at Broadview Place and Ward Avenue), the trail is not well connected to the commercial area immediately to the west adjacent to Mormon Coulee Road.

4.2.2 Proposed Multi-Use Trails

Two multi-use trails have been proposed for the corridor. The City of La Crosse and the Town of Shelby have proposed constructing the Mormon Creek Trail, a multi-use trail paralleling Mormon Creek south of US 14/61 and east of its junction with WIS 35. The six-mile paved trail would be 10 feet wide, connecting destinations in the southern end of the City of La Crosse – such as Southern Bluffs Elementary School and Goose Island County Park – with the community of Shelby. The trail would follow Mormon Creek from Sunnyside Drive near its intersection with WIS 35 and travel generally northeast along the west/north bank of Mormon Creek and County MM. At Continental Lane in the Town of Shelby, the proposed trail crosses Mormon Creek and follows the southeastern bank under the Bloomer Mill Road bridge and through Mormon Coulee Park, where it again crosses the creek and joins Park Drive and Harvest Lane as an on-street trail,



terminating in the Brookwood subdivision. A spur would diverge from the main route near the intersection of County MM and Mormon Creek, traveling north-northwest approximately 0.5 mile to US 14/61. The spur crosses beneath the highway in an existing box culvert drainage underpass (to which pedestrian lighting would be added) and joins with Waterford Valley Road on the north side of US 14/61. The city of La Crosse has applied for enhancement funds to construct the trail.

The Goose Island Connector Trail is proposed by the City of La Crosse to connect the 33rd Street Trail (Pammel Creek Trail) to Goose Island County Park. Enhancement funds for construction have been applied for. The trail would include a 10 foot wide paved multi-use path on the west side of Mormon Coulee Road (US 14/61/WIS 35) connecting to the southern terminus of the 33rd Street Trail approximately 850 feet north of the Mormon Coulee Road/33rd Street intersection. The trail would proceed south to the intersection of US 14/61 and WIS 35, where it becomes a six-foot wide striped shoulder on the west side of WIS 35 to County GI, the entrance to the park. In addition to striping, a physical barrier may be constructed to separate the multi-use facility from vehicular traffic on this portion of the trail. The proposed trail is 2.2 miles in length.

4.2.3 Bicycle Routes and Facilities



Several signed bicycle routes are located in the study corridor. A north to south bicycle route travels on 33rd Street, 16th Street, and East Avenue. An east-west bicycle route is marked on Ward Avenue and signed on Broadview Place. Ward Avenue and Broadview Place connect the 33rd Street Trail to the commercial area along US 14/61, as well as to a park – home to the Hillview baseball complex of the Shelby Youth Baseball and Softball Organization – just east of the corridor.

Paved shoulders are present on US 14/61 east of its junction with WIS 35.

4.3 Existing Pedestrian Facilities

The presence, quality, and apparent demand for pedestrian facilities vary markedly along the three segments of the corridor. This is because land use and density of development vary between Segments A, B, and C, ranging from “big box” commercial to urban residential and institutional along the northern segment of South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road to rural, agricultural uses in the eastern segment of US 14/61, and open space and recreational uses in the southern segment around WIS 35.

4.3.1 South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road Segment (Segment A)

South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road is of a decidedly different character than the two rural segments in the quantity and quality of pedestrian facilities, the demand for facilities, and land use and density of development. The entire 3.5 mile segment, with the exception of three blocks within the Town of Shelby, lies in the City of La Crosse. The urban segment contains a mix of pedestrian destinations including commercial retail establishments, several commercial offices, residential areas, and neighborhood parks.

Land use at the southern end of the segment, along Mormon Coulee Road, is generally characterized by “big box” and auto-oriented retail fronting the

roadway. Residential development – both single-family and multi-family – is located to the east and west of the highway itself. The northern end of the segment is developed in a more traditional urban style, with narrower street widths, single-family housing, parks, and small retail uses abutting South Avenue. In addition, office, light industrial, and institutional uses are located throughout the corridor. Major institutions located in the urban segment include the offices of the Roman Catholic Diocese of La Crosse; three schools; several churches; a State of Wisconsin office building; Riverfront Plaza, a care and employment facility for the disabled; and the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center. Finally, Sherwood Park (an open space along Pammel Creek) and Trane Park (a city park with playfields) are found in this segment of the study corridor.



Mormon Coulee Road has sidewalks on the west side of the roadway for its entire length. On the east side of Mormon Coulee Road, sidewalks are in place from Marion Drive northward. Sidewalks along the urban segment are generally narrow, and in most sections, directly abut travel lanes or provide only a narrow terrace as a buffer between pedestrians and automobile traffic. In some places the sidewalks are in moderate states of disrepair, with uneven sections of pavement and weeds growing through cracks in the concrete. Curbcuts at some driveways incur into the sidewalk path slightly.

Street lighting along the Mormon Coulee Road portion of the urban segment are provided by cobra-style streetlights designed to improve visibility for automobile traffic. Cobra-style lighting consists of a rounded head affixed to an extended arm. Pedestrian-scale lighting for sidewalk users is absent from the segment.

Sidewalks are present on many of the streets intersecting Mormon Coulee Road, however, gaps are present or the system is discontinuous on some streets. Most residential streets south of the Mormon Coulee Road/Birch Street intersection lack sidewalks completely.

Marked crosswalks are located at signalized intersections along Mormon Coulee Road at the entrance to the Wal-Mart parking lot north of Lakota Court; Broadview Place/Shelby Road; Birch Street; Losey Boulevard; Victory Street; and Ward Avenue. The crosswalk locations are between 0.25 mile and 0.4 mile apart. Crosswalk markings do not exist at the Mormon Coulee Road/33rd Street intersection, although a bus stop with shelter is placed nearby. Mormon Coulee Road is very wide, from the point of view of a pedestrian.

A pedestrian bridge over Pammel Creek connects Sherwood Park to the mobile home park along Rivercrest Drive. Residents of the subdivision clearly use the bridge to access Wal-Mart and other retail areas on the west side of Mormon Coulee Road, evidenced by the path worn in the grass beneath the highway bridge over the river and railroad trestle. Pedestrians choose this shorter route over the sidewalk on the highway bridge. The highway bridge is less direct and more exposed to traffic hazards than the informal path.

The Wal-Mart itself provides pedestrian access to the store from the neighborhoods west of it by including a break in the ten foot privacy fence at a point where it meets Markle Road near the northwest corner of the



property. Without the gap, shoppers would have to travel around the property to access the store's main entrances along Mormon Coulee Road.

At the intersection of US 14/61/WIS 35 and East Avenue, Mormon Coulee Road undergoes a name change to South Avenue and the posted vehicle speed is reduced from 40 mph to 30 mph. A block further north, at 17th Street, the roadway narrows to two travel lanes in each direction. Sidewalks are present on both sides of South Avenue throughout this portion of the urban segment and are present on most of the residential streets that intersect South Avenue as well. The six foot wide sidewalks are generally perceived to be narrow because typically abut the travel lanes on South Avenue without buffers between pedestrians and automobile traffic. Curbside parking is not allowed anywhere along the South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road corridor. The sidewalks in this area are generally in a good state of repair.

Street lighting along South Avenue is provided by cobra-style streetlights spaced too far apart to adequately light sidewalks for pedestrians. There is no pedestrian-scale lighting for sidewalk users. Many commercial structures along South Avenue are built directly abutting the sidewalk. Because there are no street trees or other landscape elements between the travel lanes and the buildings, conditions for pedestrians are consequently very noisy.

Of nine legal crosswalks in this segment, only four are marked with pavement striping, at the South Avenue intersections with Ward Avenue, 14th Street, West Avenue, and Green Bay Street. Only one bus stop in the segment has a marked crosswalk associated with it located at the South Avenue/Ward Avenue intersection.



Because South Avenue is aligned northwest-to-southeast, it intersects the La Crosse street grid obliquely, creating intersection geometries that pose special problems for pedestrians. Each intersection includes three streets and five to six corners. Crosswalk markings at Ward Avenue and West Avenue often lead pedestrians in a circuitous crossing pattern. At West Avenue, a pedestrian must cross four individual segments to wind up directly across South Avenue. At the intersections of South Avenue with 14th Street, and Townsend Street, the marked crosswalk leads pedestrians across the widest part of the intersection, leading to prolonged exposure to vehicular traffic. Trane Park, located at the intersection of South Avenue with 15th Street and Chase Street, is likely a major pedestrian destination in the residential area, but there are no marked crosswalks at the intersection. There are, however, pedestrian crossing signs warning motorists to be cautious in the vicinity of the park.

4.3.2 WIS 35 Segment (Segment B)

This segment lies primarily in the Town of Shelby, with a small portion at the northern end falling in the City of La Crosse. It includes the Maple Grove neighborhood located just southeast of the US 14/61/WIS 35 intersection. Land use along this segment consists largely of open space, with some commercial, residential, and institutional uses including Goose Island County Park located to the west of the segment.

Few pedestrian facilities exist along this segment of the study area. At the northern end of the segment, motorists approaching Southern Bluffs Elementary School are warned about pedestrians in the area via signs. The

shoulders of WIS 35 are paved south of Sunnyside Drive, however there is no pedestrian crosswalk.

Limited sidewalk facilities are present on the south side of Sunnyside Drive, and, further north, on the west side of WIS 35 at the US 14/61/WIS 35 intersection. The residential streets surrounding the elementary school are not equipped with sidewalks either. Some expectation of pedestrian demand is reasonable along this segment, because of the school.

A sidewalk plan is being developed by the city of La Crosse to address linkages with the existing sidewalk system. Areas included in the plan include Brickyard Lane, Vista Del Rio, and connecting the South Winds area to Southern Bluffs Elementary School.

The county park may be a draw for residents of the neighborhoods on the east side of WIS 35 as well.

4.3.3 US 14/61 Segment (Segment C)

This segment lies primarily in the Town of Shelby, with small portions of the western end in the City of La Crosse. As it is largely rural in character, minimal pedestrian facilities exist in this segment. Much of the segment includes paved shoulders.

The US 14/61/WIS 35 intersection, located at the western end of the segment, is divided and very wide, creating a particularly difficult crossing for pedestrians. However, there are likely few pedestrians attempting to cross at this location, both because the intersection is not designed to accommodate them and because there are no major pedestrian destinations at this time in the immediate vicinity along US 14/61.

5.0 Land Use & Transportation Plans/Zoning/Ordinances

The three segments of the study area are located within the City of La Crosse and the Town of Shelby jurisdictions. The entire study area lies within La Crosse County and the planning area of the La Crosse Area Planning Committee. As such, a number of land use plans, transportation plans, and local ordinances guide land use activities that occur within the study area. In addition, a number of specialized studies have taken place within the study area. Local plans were reviewed as part of the study and are included in (Table 3, Inventory of Plans and Ordinances).

Table 3 – Inventory of Plans and Ordinances

Plan Name	Plan Owner
State Transportation Plan 2020	WisDOT
Regional Transportation Plan – Multi-modal Transit Element (2004)	La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC)
Long-Range Transportation Plan for the La Crosse Area (1998 – 2000)	La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC)
La Crosse County Development Plan 2020	La Crosse County
La Crosse County Zoning Ordinance	La Crosse County
La Crosse County Subdivision Ordinance	La Crosse County
Confluence: The La Crosse Comprehensive Plan (2002)	City of La Crosse
City of La Crosse Zoning Ordinance	City of La Crosse
City of La Crosse Subdivision Ordinance	City of La Crosse

5.1 Existing Plans and Ordinances

The La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) is designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the greater La Crosse area. As such, it is charged with developing a regional transportation plan for the area, scheduling many short- and long-term roadway improvements. Currently, the entire study area falls under the LAPC's Long-Range Transportation Plan (1998 and 2000) covering the greater La Crosse metropolitan area.

The LAPC completed the *2030 La Crosse and La Crescent Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan (MTP)* that was adopted in August of 2005. A traffic demand forecasting model is a component of the plan used to identify and prioritize transportation projects. The Long-Range Transportation Plan (1998) was reviewed for compatibility with this study under the anticipation that transportation priorities could change in the new long-range plan (MTP).

La Crosse County zoning and subdivision ordinances currently have jurisdiction over the unincorporated portions of the study area including the Towns of Shelby and Greenfield. La Crosse County is in the process of updating the *La Crosse County Development Plan 2020* with a smart growth compliant comprehensive plan in late 2005.

The City of La Crosse completed its comprehensive planning activities in fall 2002 with *Confluence: The La Crosse Comprehensive Plan*. The smart growth compliant plan replaced an older plan from 1977 and contains 14 elements including sections related to transportation and land use. The planning horizon for the document is 2020. The City of La Crosse also administers its own zoning and subdivision ordinances. The urban segment and portions of the other two study segments fall under both ordinances. The transportation element of the city's comprehensive plan identifies a number of issues and strategies that are compatible with this study.

The Town of Shelby currently falls under La Crosse County zoning and subdivision ordinances. The town has not created a "Smart Growth" compliant plan at this time.